

## Boundary Line Between Kershaw and Lancaster Counties

By request we publish the following report of Mr. T. M. Belk, surveyor, to the Supervisor of Lancaster county as to the boundary line between the counties of Lancaster and Kershaw:

Having been called upon to examine all evidence as to the true location of the County Line between Lancaster and Kershaw and to report whether the last line, Wilson survey, is correct, and, if not, to give facts as to why it is not correct.

Therefore, I hand in the following report, after surveying in part all the lines from Hammond's spring to Lynch river.

There being little dispute between the Russell Place and Catawba river, I did not go farther west than Hammond's spring. Mr. P. T. Twitty says he dug out and made a spring here since the war, but does not know whether or not there ever was an old spring here. Whether or not this is the old spring place, called for in 1820, is very doubtful as the main spring for the Hammond house was south of the house and not north, however, this is the spring called for in the Act of 1892 and called for in the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey, under which the Act was presumably based.

Here I found coming from Russell place, the Wilson-Dwight-Colcock line struck 228 feet to the west of (north of) the new corner they established (75 feet south of Hammond spring) and indicated change of the needle of over one and six-tenths degrees to strike their new corner instead of one and one-twelfth degrees as in their report. If they run north 74 east, according to the Act, this will give N. 75 6-10 degrees E. instead of N. 72 11-12 degrees E. as called for in their report.

The next line from Hammond's spring the Act calls for N. 48 E. and the 'Wilson survey' calls for exactly the same degree. Had they made the same mistake with this line as they did with the trial line, just mentioned between two known corners of the Ragsdale-McIlwain-Halle survey, they would have struck the Salisbury road about 150 yards south of the point they located as a new corner (20 feet south of creek.)

As a matter of fact, they struck the Salisbury road 140 to 150 feet N. or the Stone corner placed there by the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey. This place was pointed out to me by three men who were with the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey and these three men, J. S. L. Barton, Albert Bailey and S. C. Gardner, could not be mistaken as it was just south of a large oak and at the intersection of, or just south of a small road leading out westward. Their statement of this corner is also corroborated by Dr. McDowell of Kershaw, who also was present at time of survey.

From the corner near Hanging Rock creek, they measured around a new road that circles a hill instead of measuring straight up a hill, as Mr. Barton says. Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale did. I measured both distances and found it 45 feet farther around the hill.

Then measuring down the Salisbury road, the 'Wilson Survey' placed a corner 608 feet short of the stone corner of the Halle-Ragsdale-McIlwain survey—that is, farther north. This stone corner was pointed out to me by Mr. J. S. L. Barton, who was with the Halle-Ragsdale-McIlwain survey, as stated above. Mr. Archie Vincent also pointed out this same stone corner as shown him by C. H. Ragsdale, one of the before mentioned surveyors, who started at this same stone corner in locating which county a man was killed—this being not long after the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey. Others pointed out this same stone corner to me as being told it was the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale corner. The location of this stone, under a cedar, and there being no large walnut north the one near this place, together with the positive statement of Mr. Barton that this was the corner—that C. C. Halle, Surveyor, showed it to the others the day or survey, and that they began here and measured northward to locate the corner near the creek and did locate it by the measurements from this corner (whether correct measurements or not) makes this stone unquestionably the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale corner of 1892. Mr. Neal Bennett was also helping with the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey and states to me that the stone corner of the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale corner was under, or by, a cedar and not far south of a large walnut, nearly opposite, or but little north of Bethel church and away south of new stone of 'Wilson Survey.' Mr. Richard Halle of Columbia was also present, and, if necessary, others can testify to this corner.

Distances cannot be counted in a court of justice, against the known fact of a corner, and, especially so, when the three other lines from Catawba river to Salisbury road measured show over 450 yards gain of distance; and this gain on a whole distance of less than 15 miles.

Starting from this new corner of the 'Wilson Survey,' 608 feet north of the true Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey, they passed through Kershaw about 300 yards north of the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey and struck Lynch river by actual measure 550 yards (straight across) north of the place Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale cornered, and about 600 yards north of where Plackney struck Lynch river in his survey.

This place was shown me by Mr. Charles Byrd and his brother, Bill, both of whom were with the crowd when the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey was made. They showed me a mulberry in their field that had always been pointed out to them as on the County line and that they passed right by this mulberry and carried the chain right close by it. They also showed me just about where the Halle-Ragsdale-McIlwain survey struck Lynch river, this being the

place pointed out to them time of their survey as the old Harrison ford. Mr. Bob Mungo was with us, a Kershaw man of 50 to 60 years, who lives in a few hundred yards of the line and about one mile of the corner at Lynch river, he corroborates the Byrd statement as to the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale line here and also as to this being the place old men had always shown him as the true corner.

Take the two lines of the 'Wilson survey,' before mentioned; first from Hammond's spring to Salisbury road, and then from corner near Bethel church to Lynch river. In their report they say of the first of these lines, from Hammond's spring to Salisbury road, we run the exact degree given in the Act (of 1892), while on the second line from Bethel church to Lynch river, they say, we gave one-fourth degree variation. They found no corners.

Now, if one of their lines was correct, without any variation, the other could not be correct with one-fourth degree variation given, or vice versa. But, as a matter of fact, they should have given one degree variation on each line, since the degrees were taken in 1892 or earlier.

Should the Wilson surveyors have cornered on the McIlwain-Ragsdale-Halle cornerstone, near Bethel church, 608 feet south of where they did corner, and have run north 67 east, giving one degree for variation since the year 1892—the true variation to a small fraction of a degree—as I have found from a government manual, and from the actual survey or hundreds of lines in my twenty years of practical experience (and I might add) I have made a specialty of locating old and disputed lines, should they have done this, and have continued their course thus on to Lynch river, they would have struck Lynch river at or within a few yards of the old corner place at Harrison's old ford, where Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale cornered. Or, again, had they started at the exact line on Lynch river with the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey, (I mean at Harrison's old ford) and have run south 66 1/2 west—with only one-fourth degree variation—they would have struck the Salisbury road more than 30 yards south of the corner that Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale did, as a matter of fact, corner at, and over 500 yards south of their own corner.

Now, since the report of the Wilson-Dwight-Colcock survey, admits that the Act of the legislature in 1892 is presumably based upon the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey, I have dealt principally with that survey in my report, and think I have made the difference in the 'Wilson survey,' and the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey, plain to the average man, and any college man of ten years of actual practical experience in running old and disputed lines can judge if I am correct.

Leaving the description, given in the Act of 1892, and going back beyond the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey (of 1889 and 1892) and taking up the old plats and maps of Lancaster and Kershaw counties and all the most substantial evidence of old people, I find some facts which I wish to state briefly.

First, taking the corner near Hanging Rock creek, and I find that the creek itself has been changed. Mr. J. H. Robinson showed me on the ground as near as he could where the old creek run, and by actual measure it was 130 to 150 yards south of the bridge as it now stands. He said when he was a boy the creek run around south edge of bottom at bridge and west of the old road to, or near where a little branch enters bottom and there crossed the road under a bridge, running along south edge of bottom back eastward to present channel near large rocks. W. D. Usery corroborates this statement and adds that he knows this to be a fact as well as he is living. Others tell me they know this to be true.

This canal, where the bridge now is, was cut since the war about 1865 to 1875. Measuring from old channel here, according to oldest data, does not miss corner at Bethel church very much.

Second, corner near Bethel church has never been considered, I find by oldest people of both counties, any further north than the stone corner found by Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale in their survey. The older set of people did claim a large rock set up in the sand, on east edge of road and right in front of church, but Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale in their survey did not corner on this rock. This is a nice granite rock, which stands 2 to 2 1/2 feet out of the ground and about 6 inches square, while the stone Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale cornered on is a black rock about 8 to 12 inches in diameter and 247 feet farther north.

Poss Lanier, the very oldest settler, who lived right by corner, and perhaps the best informed man in this section of the state, told me before his death (in presence of Mr. Will Croxton), that the corner of Lancaster and Kershaw counties was a black rock under a cedar and not this tall rock in front of church. I never knew where this black rock was until it was shown me by Mr. Barton. The deed of George Miller to the members of Beaver Creek (Bethel) church in 1855 does not call for a rock corner as was supposed. In substantiation of that fact that no corner was ever claimed north of black rock, I refer to W. D. Usery, J. H. Robinson, two of our oldest men, and to Mr. J. T. Truesdell of Kershaw county, and the Magill family, who live right by corner with all the facts they have gotten from everybody since the dispute began.

Again, the oldest record of this corner, given in Mill's History of South Carolina, published in 1826, calls for a corner opposite Miller's house; and Miller's house place is given up by the old citizens to be at

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the spot where Bethel church now stands, or about opposite the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale corner where pieces of Delph and crockery is now found.

Mills gives N. 62 1/2 E. from this corner in 1820 as a survey. Four and one-half degrees variation since 1820 gives us exactly N. 67 E.—or same as Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey with one degree variation since 1892.

On this line from Bethel church to Lynch river, it is impossible to give one-tenth of the data I obtained, or could have taken down, in a short sketch like this.

The new 'Wilson survey' was above the line of contention, even in Kershaw, where I find two old roads met, the junction of these roads at each place, was taken as the original line. The old settlers, I am reliably informed, disputed over these two forks of roads, long before the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey.

Leaving Kershaw, the 'Wilson survey' soon got away above or north of, all contention of the line.

J. C. Broom, 50 years old, who lives five miles east of Kershaw, and in Kershaw county, says new line is about one-fourth mile north of what his father, Wesley Broom, deceased, always claimed as the line. Never heard anyone say line was so far north, and the general impression was 'new line' was at wrong place. His land was bounded on north by Lancaster county line, but new line was about one-fourth mile north of upper edge of his place. A little farther east Mr. Morgan has a one hundred-acre tract of land in Lancaster county, calling for Kershaw county line on south side. New line only leaves about seven acres, he says, in Lancaster county.

The last six or eight miles next to Lynch river I read the Wilson report to various ones, which says: "When we got within three miles of Lynch river, however, it became evident that our line was then north of the line shown on Mills' Atlas and of the line of the more recent surveys, and it so continued, striking the river one-fourth mile apparently above the point shown in the Atlas, though several residents of the locality stated that our line, even here coincided with what their fathers had pointed out as the original line." I asked everybody I could find, black and white, of both counties, if this statement was correct, and every single man said not according to what their fathers and all the old settlers had told them all their lives. Different ones remarked that they did not believe anyone in that locality has made such a remark—that it must have been made by someone far away from their section. Among the names of those questioned, I submit the following names: M. C. Gardner, John Bird, Charles Bird, Bill Bird, Rob Mungo, Alex Mungo (colored), and perhaps a dozen others.

Mr. W. T. Threatt says his father, Miles T. Threatt, has lived for many years or more across Lynch river (and I believe he said) one mile from Lynch river. That Harrison's ford, or signs of old road, could be seen when he was young and that the corner of Lancaster and Kershaw county was one-fourth mile, or 500 yards, he would say, south of the new Wilson corner on Lynch river.

river. I also talked with a number of Kershaw town citizens of both counties, and every one told me they had never yet heard a single man say the new line and corner on Lynch river was correct, or anything like correct.

The Act of 1892 was evidently made to confirm the Halle-McIlwain-Ragsdale survey, and taxpayers have been governed by this for 16 years. It would be a great injustice to Lancaster county to take an Act based on the actual line, run by Messrs. Halle, McIlwain and Ragsdale—old, practical land surveyors—and to so construe this Act of the legislature as to cut Lancaster county out of 2,000 acres of land.

Respectfully submitted,

T. M. BELK, Surveyor.  
P. S.—I have no doubt but that Messrs. Wilson, Colcock and Dwight are very smart gentlemen, but it may be they are better up on theory of surveying, and a thousand other things, than they are up on locating old and disputed lines.

T. M. B.

Very True.

Baltimore American.  
The Phenologist—Yes, sir, by feeling the bumps on your head I can tell you exactly what sort of a man you are.

Mr. Dolan—O! believe it wud give ye more av an oldea wot sort av a whimmen me wolfe is.

**WHO IS W. F. STEVENSON?**

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What does the farmer say about this? Give Stevenson a chance, and he will do his best, not only to "put the Fifth district on the map," but to put the farmers of the fifth district on the map also.

Adv.

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